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# PRESENT TENDENCIES IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN AMERICA

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The Society of Friends, more generally known as Quakers,<sup>1</sup> is one of the few Protestant English-speaking religious organizations whose history goes back to the middle of the seventeenth century. Only the Episcopalians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians antedate them. Though George Fox, the founder, had been preaching for some years, the year 1652 is commonly taken as the beginning of the organization, and the year 1656 marks their entrance into America. Neither Fox nor his immediate associates at first had any thought of setting up a new denomination. They believed their message was for all men. That it was incompatible with existing church polity and practice was forced upon them, and, almost in spite of themselves, a new religious body sprang up. Within the lifetime of Fox, and largely his own work, a democratic organization was instituted which, with but slight alteration in details, has lasted till the present day.

During the more than two and one-half centuries of its existence the society has passed through several trying periods, the most serious of which was a separation in 1827-28, which for a time threatened to wreck it. The causes of this division were many, but the most obvious were matters of organization and of doctrine. Though the basis of the church polity is a pure democracy, a supplementary organization known as the Meeting of Ministers and Elders, in later times the Meeting on Ministry and Oversight, claimed and exercised far greater powers than had been customary

<sup>1</sup> As the Orthodox comprise about four-fifths of all calling themselves Friends, reference will be to them, unless otherwise stated.

in earlier days. This body was subordinate to the Yearly Meeting, and at no time have its members been considered a separate class. The minister or elder in the conduct of church affairs in no respect differs from the other members. Notwithstanding this well-known fact, the elders in particular often made decisions which to many in the rank and file seemed arbitrary and intolerant. In addition, and in connection with this, doctrines claimed to be unscriptural and at variance with the accepted doctrines of the Society were set forth by certain ministers. The doctrines resembled those of the Unitarians, and in some instances were distinctly rationalistic. The result was a divided body, and weakness in the promulgation of those teachings held in common. Later a further but much smaller separation took place relating rather to matters of practice than of doctrine. Thus, at the middle of the nineteenth century, there were three bodies—Orthodox, Hicksite, and Conservative<sup>1</sup>—each claiming the name of Friends or Quakers. The Orthodox in essentials agreed with the evangelical bodies; the Conservatives differed from the Orthodox chiefly in practice; and the Hicksites or Liberals, as they like to be called, laid no stress whatever on doctrine. The Orthodox in 1828 were somewhat larger in numbers than the Hicksites, and the Conservatives much smaller than either. For some years all bodies showed a steady decline in membership, the greatest being among the Hicksites, a decline which has continued to the present time. The Orthodox body, on the other hand, not only ceased to decline, but began to grow, in some years making large accessions to its numbers.<sup>2</sup> With slight exception these three bodies had no official intercourse, and for many years there was much antagonistic feeling. But with the passing away of the leaders who had been active in the period of disruption,

<sup>1</sup> Hicksite, so called from Elias Hicks, the most prominent leader among them; Conservative, long called Wilburite, after John Wilbur, a prominent leader.

<sup>2</sup> In 1918 the official statistics were: Orthodox, 97,275; Hicksites, 18,218; Conservatives (partly estimated), 3,648.

the bitterness gradually disappeared, and a feeling of friendliness has largely taken its place, especially in recent years.

While the Orthodox in essentials agree with the evangelical bodies, there are certain great differences. The Friends from the very first, and this is true of all Friends, have held that there is a living, independent, personal relation to God—a direct revelation of Himself to the individual—a light from Himself “shining in the heart and conscience.” This doctrine of the “inner light” or “inward light” was no new teaching, but it had been, to a very great extent, obscured or lost sight of. It meant that in every man there is that which answers to God’s message or call, and which, if followed, will lead to Christ. This, the cardinal teaching of the Friends, calls for a system of worship which will afford opportunity for individual communion with God as well as for the exercise of individual gifts. Hence the necessity for meeting in silence. There also flowed from it the belief that if the soul has direct communion with God, an outward communion is not only unnecessary but will be likely to draw attention to the symbol rather than to a personal spiritual experience. Again, as no outward baptism can cleanse the soul, such is needless and may be hurtful.<sup>1</sup> The teaching further implied that anyone, man or woman, might be called of God to exercise the gift of the ministry independently of scholastic training. Ministers were to be *recognized*, not ordained. So there is no ordination among the Friends to this day. There is no division of clergy and laity—all members are upon the same plane.

It might naturally be supposed that this doctrine of the “inward light” would lead to extravagances and error, and the Friends have always recognized this danger.<sup>2</sup> But if this is the light of Christ, as claimed, it will not lead to that

<sup>1</sup> General William Booth, more than two centuries later, on practically the same grounds, disused the ordinances in the Salvation Army.

<sup>2</sup> This danger was realized very soon in the case of Nayler and of Perrot. The former acknowledged his error and repented and was reinstated; the latter severed his connection with the body.

which is at variance or inconsistent with his teachings. Here is the test to which the Friends have never hesitated to submit.

Another historic position, and the one most prominent in the near past, is the attitude toward war. War to George Fox and the early Quakers was absolutely incompatible with the type of Christianity which they professed. Fox said to one who wished him to enter the army, "I told him I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all war." And an official document of 1660 says:

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatever. . . . The spirit of Christ . . . will never lead us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world.

This statement is based on the belief that the Spirit of Christ is a spirit of love, not one of hate and destruction. All official declarations of the Society from that time to the present have never varied from this position; it is the historic position of the body.

It was held from the first that the outward life must conform to the inward spiritual life; so there must be truth and justice in all dealings with others. This requires that all statements must be truthful, hence no oath is needful, and is contrary to the words of Christ. Moreover, the use of an oath sets up two standards. Justice in trade led to the establishment of fixed prices for perhaps the first time in economic history.

Though the theory has always been that women were exactly on an equality with men, and it has been carried out in regard to the ministry, in church administration it was not completely so till the nineteenth century.

For the first half-century the Friends were an active missionary body, and their missionaries visited all parts of Europe, America, the West Indies, and even Turkey. Large sums for that age were raised to support this work, which was carried on with enthusiasm and almost regardless of difficulties, hardships, and sufferings. That results were not

permanent is chiefly, because these efforts were not systematically followed up, and partly because of the kind of governments existing on the Continent, which, based on force and carried on under a system of militarism, were fatal to the existence of a body whose principles were based on love and whose adherents lived according to the principles of a Prince of Peace.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century the Society sank into a condition of quietism, occupying itself in preserving its "testimonies" rather than reaching out and continuing the missionary efforts of earlier years.

But if the Friends were lacking in religious missionary zeal, it was not so in practical matters, such as penal reform, wise treatment of the insane, and just treatment of the American Indian, all of which claimed their close attention. Even more than these was their attitude toward slavery. In 1688 some German Friends of Germantown, Pennsylvania, made a protest against holding men in bondage, so far as known the first official protest of any religious body on this subject. About the middle of the eighteenth century John Woolman became the apostle of freedom, and through his efforts and those of others the conscience of Friends was so aroused that by the close of the century slavery was driven out of the Society, and thereafter no Friend could own a slave. This action had far-reaching effects, for it led to the whole-sale emigration of the Quakers from the slave states of Virginia and the Carolinas to the free soil of Ohio, Indiana, and the Northwest, not only furnishing sturdy, independent, and industrious citizens to these states, but exerting no small influence on the Quaker body itself.

It was not till about thirty years or more after the troubles of 1828 that the decline in membership was arrested in the Orthodox body. In the country west of the Alleghanies the Friends began to grow not only by the emigration just mentioned and by that from other eastern states, but by accessions through request. The Society had again become an aggressive

body. It was not long before the traditional dress of the eighteenth century and the language began to be laid aside, and the discipline considerably relaxed. The quietism of the previous century had become an evangelistic spirit. This led to some important changes in polity and practice. Methods similar to those used in the revivals of other religious bodies were employed, and in various ways new ideas and practices came into being. Territories where Friends were unknown were entered, and converts were made who had no knowledge of Quaker doctrine or history. After conversion these needed religious instruction. To meet this need, men and women were appointed whose work closely resembled that of the Methodist pastor, and in many places congregations worshiped which could scarcely be distinguished from those of other denominations. In fact, the chief difference was the omission of the Lord's Supper and baptism.<sup>1</sup> Thus sprang up what is known among the Friends as the "pastoral system."

It was quite evident to thoughtful Friends that a centrifugal force was at work, which, if not checked, would be disastrous to the body. After some preliminary effort, a general conference representing all the Yearly Meetings<sup>2</sup> in America but one, and those in Great Britain and Ireland, met at Richmond, Indiana, in 1887. It was a conference for discussion only and was without power, but it was of great value in bringing Friends together. Its main visible work was the preparation and issuing of a long and rather verbose "Declaration of Faith." Another conference was held in 1892, at which the representation was in proportion to membership. The evident value of these conferences led to a continuance in 1897, at which time the advantages of a closer union were discussed, and means adopted to bring a tentative

<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that at one period a few Friends advocated the use of these.

<sup>2</sup> A Yearly Meeting somewhat resembles a Methodist Conference. It is composed of a number of subordinate meetings. A representative gathering which is the legislative body for the group and also a final court of appeal meets annually. The bounds of a Yearly Meeting are mainly on geographical lines, though not wholly so.

plan of union before a conference in 1902. To this conference a plan of union with a constitution and practically uniform discipline was presented with the indorsement of a large majority of the Yearly Meetings of America. Through this action the Five Years' Meeting of the Friends in America came into being, and it has held quinquennial sessions since 1902. There can be little doubt that this is the most important event in the history of American Quakerism, for through it what had been practically a congregational union became an organized church.<sup>1</sup>

The plan of the Five Years' Meeting is that of a federal union, which in principle closely resembles the Articles of Confederation of the United States which preceded the Constitution. Under it each Yearly Meeting is practically independent as to local interests but unites, by means of a quinquennial proportional representative body and various standing boards, with the other members of the union in matters of common interest, such as evangelistic work, foreign and home missions, Bible schools, peace, education, young people's activities, legislation, publication, and the like. This union has worked fully as well as was expected by most of its advocates, and, while during the eighteen years of its existence there has been some friction, and two Yearly Meetings remain outside, there can be no doubt that it has brought Friends closer together,<sup>2</sup> and that by united action church activities have been better organized and better work has been done.<sup>3</sup> This is particularly true of the foreign-mission work, which

<sup>1</sup> It was not the first time such an effort had been made, for the records show that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1683, probably at the suggestion of William Penn, proposed to hold a general meeting of Friends from New England to Carolina. It was probably owing to geographical conditions and difficulties of transportation that the scheme was not carried out.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Yearly Meeting remains apart chiefly on the ground of doctrine, claiming that the doctrines upheld are too liberal; and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting chiefly on the ground of preserving full, independent action.

<sup>3</sup> The Yearly Meetings composing the Five Years' Meeting are New England, New York, Baltimore, North Carolina, Wilmington (Ohio), Indiana, Western (Indiana), Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, California, Oregon, and Canada.



has been brought under the direction and oversight of the American Friends' Board of Foreign Missions, thus obviating duplication of officers, and greatly aiding in the assignment of missionaries and in the economic and wise administration of the work.<sup>1</sup>

Another striking feature in the polity of the Friends since 1912 has been the Young Friends' Movement. This is an organized association of the younger members for the purpose of deepening their own spiritual life and supporting and extending the activities of the body at large. This is done by local associations, study-groups, country-wide conferences, and personal efforts in such fields as seem to call for work.

Besides the Boards, the Five Years' Meeting has a general secretary with an office at Richmond, Indiana, whose duties are the collection and dissemination of intelligence of value to the body, collection and tabulation of statistics, aiding in the meetings and work of the Boards and Committees, serving as a medium of communication between needy fields and available workers or committees, and in every way furthering the interests of the denomination.

One important matter remains to be dwelt upon. With some notable exceptions, the meetings of the Friends have adopted, though not officially, some form of a pastoral system.<sup>2</sup> It should be clearly understood, however, that this does not mean that every individual meeting has a pastor; very far from it, but the tendency has been toward such a condition, particularly in the West where there has been no Quaker background.

<sup>1</sup> The fields of labor of the Five Years' Meeting are Cuba, Mexico, Jamaica, Palestine, and British East Africa. The amounts collected were, in 1905, \$6,953; in 1917-19 (six months) \$150,155 (a special effort). Besides these missions Philadelphia Friends maintain flourishing missions in Japan; Ohio Yearly Meeting missions in India and China; and California Yearly Meeting missions in Alaska and Central America.

<sup>2</sup> This includes all the Yearly Meetings of the Five Years' Meeting (except Baltimore Yearly Meeting), and Ohio Yearly Meeting; Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has had neither pastors nor pastoral system.

Such in outline was the condition of the Friends in 1914 and recent years. Without this survey the present position and outlook of the Quaker body could hardly be understood. To the thoughtful Friend and one to whom the continuance of the body on practically its old foundation was dear, it was evident that an essential point in the situation was the meeting for worship. If this was held according to a strict program, it would be impossible for individual spiritual communion to exist or for individual gifts in the ministry or exhortation or vocal prayer to be exercised, and there could not be that "liberty of prophesying" to gain which the early Friends had suffered so much. That some sort of a pastoral system was needed in many places few could gainsay. How could it be so modified as not to conflict with historic Quaker teachings. Though perhaps not put so bluntly as this, the problem was in the minds of many, though not always acknowledged. It was also evident that there was much dissatisfaction with existing conditions, but no way of improving them was seen. No definite plan of modification has yet been proposed, but there is no doubt that at present there is an increasing desire and effort to adjust the pastoral system to the fundamentals of historic Quakerism, and this is true particularly of the younger pastors.<sup>1</sup> The Friends had become alive to contemporary problems and to the fact that a church, in order to continue, and to be effective, and to grow, must be aggressive. The association in the Five Years' Meeting not only had enabled better work to be done but also, and even more important, had brought the members East and West into that closer touch and better knowledge of each other without which it is altogether unlikely the subsequent united work would have been possible.

<sup>1</sup> In some places the pastor is not necessarily a minister, but resembles the Young Men's Christian Association Secretary, the effort being, especially in rural communities, to make the meeting a center, not only of conversion, instruction, and religious uplift, but also of social interests for the betterment of the neighborhood.

When the United States entered the Great War in 1917 an unlooked-for condition presented itself to the Friends. Since the close of the Civil War in 1865, the armies of the United States had been composed wholly of volunteers. To the Friends the matter of compulsory military service had seemed a purely academic question, but now it loomed up as a certainty. Like the British Parliament, the American Congress recognized the existence of certain religious bodies among whose historic doctrines was a conscientious objection to war and military service, and, for the members of such, provision was made for noncombatant service. But, less liberal than the British Act, individuals not belonging to the designated bodies, were ignored.<sup>1</sup>

The drastic conscription laws which were enacted fell heavily upon the Friends and the few small denominations which shared their views regarding war. Whether the historic position of the Society would be upheld was a question of anxious interest. The individual answer was to be given by young men, most of whom had never anticipated such a trial of faith. Three classes were shown to exist: those who, having no convictions against war, accepted military service; those who refused military service but accepted some kind of alternative service; and those who refused any compulsory service whatever. This last class numbered very few; the majority belonged to the middle class, though there was much difference of opinion as to what kind of alternative service could be accepted. The number of those entering the army or navy was not large<sup>2</sup>. So far as the official attitude and statements were concerned, no meeting failed to maintain the

<sup>1</sup> The definition of "noncombatant" was left to the President, and decisions to exemption boards, whose decisions often conflicted and were far from uniform. The records of the treatment of the conscientious objectors by exemption boards, military courts, and above all in the military prisons make a sad page in American history.

<sup>2</sup> The accredited number was greater from the fact that up to 1902 birthright membership was universal among the Friends, and, consequently, in 1917 there were many nominal members who, nevertheless, were reckoned as Friends.

Friends' historic attitude against war, and in favor of peaceful methods in the settlement of differences international, national, and social.

As soon as war was declared in 1914, the British Friends, as in the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71, at once formed organizations for relief work. An ambulance unit for the rescue and care of the wounded; a reconstruction unit for the aid of devastated districts; a committee for helping innocent aliens, especially women and children; a war victims' relief committee, and others. While France was the chief field, Italy, Serbia, Russia, and other countries were also fields of work. This earnest, self-sacrificing, unpaid labor was often carried on under difficult and extremely dangerous conditions.

American Friends contributed funds to help their British brethren, but when the United States entered the war in April, 1917, it was felt that personal aid and service were called for. Accordingly late in April, 1917, the American Friends' Service Committee was organized. All calling themselves Friends were invited to take part. The response was general, and members of all groups had place on the executive committee. For the first time since 1828 all those calling themselves Friends united harmoniously in a common service. When the Five Years' Meeting convened in the autumn of 1917 the committee was officially recognized by the appointment of representatives on it. It was concluded to work with English Friends, and later, in addition, to be attached to the civilian branch of the American Red Cross. An appeal brought large funds and called forth earnest workers. As the work developed it naturally was divided into groups which it may be worth while to mention: emergency work, such as assisting persons out of the danger zones and providing for their needs; agricultural, providing labor, machinery, seeds, personal service; building—such as constructing temporary houses in devastated districts; miscellaneous—providing maternity and other hos-

pitals, and factories for making portable houses and furniture, establishing co-operative stores, etc. Except necessary office work and that connected with transportation, none of the workers received any pay except a simple maintenance and their necessary traveling expenses. It will give some idea of the extent of the work to state that in three years, to May 31, 1920, the total number of American workers was 645, mostly men, and the total contributions \$2,329,868.19.<sup>1</sup>

This relief and reconstruction work received the approval of the United States War Department, the French government, and the American Red Cross, and is a complete answer to the charge frequently made during the war that pacifists must be unpatriotic and slackers.

So far as known this is the only work of the kind by a religious organization begun during the war and carried on without interruption ever since. The work in France, with the exception of the erection of a maternity hospital, has just been discontinued (July, 1920), but has gone on in Central Europe, Poland, Serbia, and elsewhere. In January, 1920, Herbert C. Hoover turned over to the American Friends' Service Committee the work of distribution of relief for the needy women and children of Germany.<sup>2</sup>

The Friends have participated in the Interchurch Movement, and moreover, antedating this, have carried on a Forward Movement of their own to sustain and extend the interests, spiritual and material, of their own denomination.

Education has always been highly valued, and schools, when they have been needed, have been maintained since an early date. But for a long period higher education was viewed

<sup>1</sup> Seventy-five workers were Mennonite conscientious objectors, turned over by the United States War Department for noncombatant service. Of the contributions \$276,115.86 were contributed by the Mennonite Board of Missions; almost all the rest by Friends.

<sup>2</sup> At last accounts (July, 1920) 632,300 children are given one meal per day in eighty-eight cities in Germany. It is expected this feeding must be continued another year, though perhaps not on so extensive a scale.

with distrust. The feeling, however, has long passed away, and at present the Society maintains seven colleges, one in the East, four in the Middle West, and two on the Pacific Coast. Haverford, Pennsylvania, though not officially connected with the Society, is owned and controlled by members. All the institutions, elementary, secondary, and higher, rank well in the classes to which they belong. Their interests are fostered by the General Board of Education of the Five Years' Meeting.

As is well known, Friends have always been in the van in the cause of temperance, and have been active in the anti-saloon and prohibition movements.

The harmonious co-operation of the different groups in the European relief work has frequently suggested the question whether it will not bring about a closer union. It may be said in reply that, so far as can be seen, it is very unlikely, for too great differences in doctrine still exist to make a church union desirable. But it has taught many that kindly feeling and much co-operation are quite possible even when there is great difference of opinion on important matters.

Passing for a moment to the Hicksite and Conservative groups, it may be said of the former that the members have been active in philanthropic and social work. Great attention has been paid to education. Their excellent schools and Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, a co-educational institution, have received hearty support. By means of biennial conferences, representing the whole group, the membership has been kept in touch with all movements of interest to the body and enabled to share more fully in whatever efforts may be made. There has been a constant tendency to greater freedom in doctrine and practice. Within the past few years recording of ministers and appointment of elders have practically ceased, and the tendency is toward the greatest possible democracy in the church organization. Notwithstanding these and other efforts and the institution of an active Young Friends'

Movement the decrease in membership has not yet been arrested.<sup>1</sup>

The Conservatives have kept the even tenor of their way repeating very nearly the quietism of the eighteenth century, and showing little missionary interest. Their membership, as nearly as can be ascertained, also shows a decline. Both groups have joined heartily in the relief and reconstruction work, and have representation on the executive committee of the American Friends' Service Committee.

A conference representing all, the world over, who call themselves Friends, was held in London, England, in August, 1920. The object of this gathering was to discuss matters of common interest, especially means for furthering the cause of peace, international, national, social, and economic, and to consider what part the Friends should take in the effort. Notwithstanding the diverse elements, and different nationalities represented, the conference was harmonious. Several addresses were issued and the general effect has been to bring all Friends into closer fellowship.

Such is a brief review of the history of Quakerism. What can be said of its present condition and tendencies? Let us return to the consideration of the Orthodox body with which we are especially concerned. Problems of peculiar difficulty face a small denomination spread over a wide expanse of country. Differences of environment, education, outlook, far more than in a large denomination, have an influence antagonistic to a close union. It is emphatically so with the Friends. That they have held together as closely as they have, is more remarkable than that there should be, here and there, disintegrating influences at work. Some members in the Middle West and more on the Pacific Coast view with concern the greater liberality in matters of doctrine, and the

<sup>1</sup> This may be partly due to the concentration of the membership, as more than half belongs to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Hicksite), and about three-fourths to Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings (Hicksite).

willingness to join in relief and other work with those they do not consider evangelical. They also lay great stress on written statements of religious doctrine, and fail to see that Friends in placing emphasis on life rather than on creed are simply maintaining their historic attitude, and taking their place alongside of those increasing numbers in other denominations who, while holding fast the essentials of Christian faith, believe that a life of Christian service is more important than subscription to a formal creed or a written statement of faith. Such dissident members are few in comparison with the membership at large and are scarcely likely to increase greatly in number. It is, however, recognized that there is a serious danger that, in devoting thought and effort to external service, the spiritual may not receive that close attention which is essential to all work professed to be carried out on a Christian basis. It is a fundamental of the Quaker faith that nothing can take the place of a personal spiritual experience.

In common with other denominations, the problem of the ministry is a serious one. That there is need for an intelligent, educated service is unquestionable; zeal, earnest exhortation, or both combined are not sufficient. How can the need be met without conflicting with the historic position of the body as to the necessity of a divine call, sometimes immediate, and "the priesthood of *all* believers"? Is it practicable, amid the legitimate demands of modern life, for members to devote the necessary time to ministerial and pastoral work? Can any considerable number of men and women of ability be expected to devote their lives or a great part of them to a work in which but a meager income for years and small prospect for the future is all that can be looked for? Various efforts have been made to meet certain phases of the question. Some Friends, a number of years ago, instituted a Bible Training School for ministers and Christian workers; but it cannot be said that the results have been satisfactory to the body at large, for the tendency has been toward the creation of a ministerial



class, inelastic methods, and a narrow outlook. A School for Social and Religious Education, much less formal, intended rather for Christian workers, has also been in operation for a few years. Another method has been to introduce into the college curriculum, for those who feel called to the ministry or Christian work, courses on the Bible, church history, sociology, psychology, and practical ways of church service. Still more recently, a well-endowed graduate school has been opened, offering instruction in "biblical literature, philosophy, sociology, history, and kindred subjects." Whether these later efforts will bring about adequate results remains to be seen, but it cannot be questioned that the last three methods are more in accord with fundamental Quakerism than the first.

Notwithstanding the local differences mentioned above, the Friends have never been more closely united than at present; their foreign-mission work has never been more extensive or better organized; nor has greater practical interest been taken in education, more interest in social and neighborhood betterment, more extended or deeper spiritual interest among the younger members; and, while the old revivalist methods have fallen largely into disuse, there is a genuine evangelistic spirit of outreaching and upbuilding very general throughout the body. To these must be added the extensive relief and reconstruction work or "service of love," as it has been called, in which all the Friends have been engaged since 1917. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this service. Taken up originally with the simple desire to aid those suffering from the war, and to show that pacifists were not necessarily shirkers of service, this self-sacrificing, voluntary labor has developed and extended into an almost international work. Great trust and responsibility have been placed, unasked, upon the Friends, and their name has become known far and wide in this connection. There is also a prospect of the continuance of this or similar work both at home and abroad.

That the reaction of recent movements within the Society has already been great is evident; what it will be in the future it is too soon to predict. One effect of the war and the relief service has been to lead many not only to examine more fully into the grounds of their religious belief, an examination to which the Young Friends' Movement has contributed in no small degree, but also to see what part the Friends should take in the effort to strengthen Christian faith and rebuild society on a Christian basis. Moreover, national and world conditions seem to call, as never before, from the Friends for a greater service, not only in definitely religious work, but also in the fields of labor adjustment and social betterment and uplift, a service for which their democratic Christian organization, their emphasis on positive good-will, and their simple religious faith would seem peculiarly to fit them.

The Friends, like the other churches, are thus facing serious problems both internal and external, the solution of which is still unknown and in the future; but to adopt the words of another,<sup>1</sup> "They look forward with courage and confidence, believing that the good hand of God which has been over them in blessing in the past is still guiding them and will continue to lead them into larger service for him who is the Master of us all."

<sup>1</sup> Professor Williston Walker regarding the Congregationalists in the *American Journal of Theology*, XXIV, 18.